

Recent Fern Literature

Just as we had bidden a reluctant farewell to Prof. Victorin's series of articles on the fernworts of Quebec, he returns briefly to the subject to describe a new species of *Botrychium*—*B. minganense*. It is very closely related to *B. Lunaria*, with which it agrees in the manner of folding of the leaf in the bud and in the point of insertion, general shape, and pinnate character of the sterile segment. It differs in the spores, which average about 1/5 larger and are more finely reticulated, in the commonly lacinate pinnae of the sterile segment in well-developed plants and in being "generally variable in the same colony." The last is an unusual character to employ in separating species (though, as taxonomists know to their cost, it may be real enough), but Prof. Victorin points out "there is all the difference in the world between the geographic variability of a wide-ranging species and the purely genetic and, moreover, apparently irregular variability which is characteristic of certain *Botrychia*." When such variability has been recognized as characteristic (as by Prof. Fernald in his discussion of *Polypodium vulgare* in *Rhodora* 24: 135) it has usually been found to be associated with species of presumably recent origin; *B. minganense*, however, is believed by Prof. Victorin to belong to the ancient flora of the unglaciated regions of northern North America. In spite of its name, it is by no means regarded as confined to the Mingan Islands; specimens from several localities about the Gulf of St. Lawrence, from the west shore of Hudson's Bay, and from the Cordillera of western North America are referred to it.¹

¹ Victorin, Fr. Marie-. Sur un *Botrychium* nouveau de la flore Américaine et ses rapports avec le *B. Lunaria* et le *B. simplex*. Trans. Roy. Soc. Canada, ser. 3, xxi (sect. V), 319-340. 1927. 6 figs., 3 pls.

Prof. M. L. Fernald has published a study of the American form of the holly fern, *Polystichum Braunii*. Most species common to Europe and America are circumboreal in range; but *P. Braunii* reaches the Arctic in neither continent, in America being a plant of the Canadian forest region. It is thus completely isolated from the European plant and, from geological evidence, doubtless has been for a very long time. In numerous similar cases, differences have developed which set the plants concerned apart as good species. That is not the case here; but Prof. Fernald finds some differences, in texture, in the scales of the stipe-base and of the rachis. He remarks that the slightness of these differences illustrates the conservatism of the ferns, but that they are "sufficient to make it clarifying to distinguish the eastern American plant . . . as a geographic variety." He calls it *P. Braunii*, var. *Purshii*, in honor of Frederick Pursh who first detected it in the Green Mountains of Vermont in 1809.²

Prof. Clute announces a re-issue of his "Fern Allies of North America," well known to fern-lovers. A brief introduction has been added, the eight colored plates of the first edition are omitted and the remaining illustrations differently arranged. Otherwise the new issue is exactly like the old. Five hundred copies are to be printed and the plates then destroyed. The price is four dollars, from Willard N. Clute & Co., Joliet, Illinois.

SCOLOPENDRIUM NOTES—We found on Nov. 23, 1924, that the Solvay Company had done all preliminary work and were ready to quarry the limestone at the Scolopendrium Station, East Green Lake, Jamesville,

² Fernald, M. L. The eastern American variety of *Polystichum Braunii*. *Rhodora* 30: 28-30, pl. 150. 1928.